

TOWN OF ABINGTON  
FINANCE COMMITTEE  
FEBRUARY 2, 2022

PRESENT: Gregory Belezerian (Vice-Chairman), Daniel Eddy, Russ Fuller, Paul Hagerty, Andrew Levrault, Christopher Murphy (1<sup>st</sup> Statistician), Barbara Rae, Matthew Salah (Chairman), Debra Libby (Recording Secretary - Minutes)

EXCUSED: Joe Rojas (Secretary)

GUESTS: Scott Lambiase, Town Manager, Sonia Hodge, Finance Director, Treasurer/Collector, Leanne Adams, Clerk, Joe LaPoint, Water, Rene Vadeboncoeur, Golf Tom Hickey, Jim Coughlin, Tom Petrozelli, SSVT

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

#### Budget Review

SSVT (Tom Hickey) – Reviewed Capital Plan projects; 1.81% increase in budget; additional staff (Social Worker, Tech Aids; additional custodial and cafeteria support (custodial staff trained for additional bus drivers). Revenue review – increased Chapter 70 funds; non-residential student costs increased within districts (set by the State and those districts are responsible for transportation costs); increase in transportation aid. \$1,062,966 local contribution calculated by the State – Abington’s assessment \$166,025. Reviewed Debt Services – (\$11,822 is Abington’s share); distributed through all towns (if no funds borrowed, debt services would be reduced); if application to be in MSBA, Capital projects would be reviewed. Future projects may include a new school, however, Mr. Hickey stated he believes a new school is not needed, just need to renovate and modernize current building for more functional space. Mr. Hickey noted the cost of a dump truck (\$70,000) will be removed from the budget. Reviewed class sizes – average 170 per year, 140 graduating students. Mr. Hagerty questioned what is involved in renovation of the school. Mr. Hickey stated more space needed for electrical classes and changes related to current job markets and student interests. Budget needs 2/3 approval (6 out of 8 towns). Mr. Salah questioned what positions are to be added. Mr. Hickey noted requests for staffing for electrical and horticultural landscape classes, tech aids and would like to increase some teaching positions, operational and cafeteria support, assistant coaching positions and a Social Worker position. Discussed Federal and COVID funding – Mr. Hickey noted all funding has been accessed through Plymouth County.

Inspectional Services (BOH/Building) (Scott Lambiase/Sonia Hodge) – Departments previously combined, but not separate budgets.

Building – Reviewed move last year to put fee revenues into the budget and taken out of revolving account; Salary line item now includes all inspectors with compensation funding for emergency issues. Funding for Building Inspector/Commissioner is included in the salary line item. Increased due to additional inspections and more staffing in department. Reviewing use of funds for emergency issues. Mileage decreased as department vehicle no longer used for this department (reviewing possible grant for electric vehicle). Code break funding – higher every few years for updating volumes and certifications. Photo copiers and wide format printer/scanner are contractual costs. Reviewed conversion to on-line system for submission of permit requests (ongoing). Lack of storage space at Town Hall is an issue and scanning paperwork may alleviate this issue. Follow State guidelines for retention of records. These are public records and contain no personal information. Travel expenses decreased; gas budget increased 25%.

Waste Collection – Salaries transferred to BOH budget. Purchasing services based on tipping fees (contractual, first year of three year contract). Mr. Lambiase will provide more information related to the tonnage costs for trash and recycling. Reviewing current billing to date to project costs for next year. Carts – funding for replacement and purchase of new trash/recycle receptacles.

Composite site decreased – grinding services no longer being done. Sharps collections – covered by CARES act. Hazardous Waste – grant funds available to help with this cost. Discussed regionalization for trash/recycle collection.

BOH – Salaries – include acting Health Director and administrative staff (place holder for full time administrative support); Public Health Nurse salary to be removed from BOH budget as this position is funded through grant funds and currently reviewing use of ARPA funds. Mr. Hagerty questioned if the grant funds are for salary only. Mr. Lambiase noted ARPA funds are not specifically for salaries. Currently reviewing multi-jurisdictional grant and Abington would be host administrator of grant. Funds could be used for food/health/housing inspectors if needed. Mr. Lambiase stated the Public Nurse position is needed for the next couple of years. Public Nurse could provide CPR training/babysitting classes/senior well checks/etc. Future funding of this position will be reviewed. Reviewing current and future staffing needs in the department. Printing and Advertising line items may be combined. Vaccines – reviewed costs and reimbursement of flu clinics; administration of clinics (provide syringes and personnel to work clinics); cost of flu shots approximately \$30.00 per shot.

At this time, there was a lengthy discussion regarding Waste Collection – ongoing discussion related to other possible programs (fee based service, pay as you throw, composting, etc.). Discussed roll back of funds from previous overrides if program changed. Mr. Lambiase stated the Finance Committee, Board of Selectmen and Board of Health should be the departments to review this issue. Public input should be considered. Mr. Belezerian noted possible use of marijuana revenue to help fund this budget. Mr. Levrault noted outside contractors have no pension/ liability costs in contracts. Other town departments/budget would be affected with increased waste collection costs. Mr. Lambiase noted the Town is enhancing social media and websites to provide information to the public. Mr. Lambiase mentioned creating a survey to get the citizens input. Mr. Hagerty expressed his view that the BOS are elected officials and should be the people to handle this issue. Ms. Rae suggested reviewing this issue with the Green Committee.

Overall Budget Review (Sonia Hodge) – Bottom line is better; Union contracts ongoing and not noted in budget (fire/Police/DPW/ Managers Union). Still a lot of work to be done. Revenues comprised of tax levy, estimated State revenue, local receipts, operational funds, etc. Motor vehicle revenue conservative as it varies from year to year.

#### Review of Minutes – January 26, 2022

Motion made by Barbara Rae, seconded by Andrew Levrault to recommend approval of the January 26, 2022 Finance Committee meeting minutes.

VOTE: 8/0/0 Unanimous

Motion carries to recommend approval of the January 26, 2022 Finance Committee meeting minutes.

Next meeting 2/9/2022

Motion made and seconded to adjourn the meeting of the Finance Committee at 9:30 p.m.